

**Middlesex/Union Infestation**

An order to show cause has been filed in Superior Court by the Attorney General's Office on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture seeking court action to facilitate the takedown of trees on the property of a Linden resident.

The resident has refused to consent to having his trees removed as part of the ALB eradication effort in Middlesex and Union counties. His is the last remaining private property from which trees need to be removed to complete the current takedown phase.

The Department and USDA, working cooperatively on this eradication effort, have consistently maintained that all trees, both infested and high-risk hosts, must be removed from a given radius to ensure that the beetle does not have the opportunity to reestablish itself. All other private property owners in the infestation area have complied and allowed the takedown consistent with this protocol.

Surveys, even those in which climbers go up into the trees, do not have a 100-percent effectiveness due to the beetle's ability to infest the highest branches that cannot be accessed by surveyors. Therefore, trees at a high risk of being infested must be removed in addition to those identified as already being infested.

**Restoration Work**

Spring planting continued last week, with 221 trees being planted on public property in Linden and Rahway by Down to Earth Landscaping. That brings the total restored trees in the Middlesex/Union infestation area to 4,613.

Follow-up survey work continues with tree-climbers from USDA, NJDA and Davey Tree Expert Company inspecting a total of 282 trees during the week of April 29-May 5. No additional sightings of beetles or their tell-tale signs on trees were reported.